

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 L-03 RSR-01 /074 W

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R 210817Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9631

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE

REF: A. SEOUL 5538

B. SEOUL USIAC 5537 (NOTAL)

1. ALL PAPERS AUGUST 21 REPORTED MAIN POINTS OF PRIME MINISTER KIM'S LETTERS TO JAPANESE LEADERS (REF A) AS ANNOUNCED IN SEOUL AUG 20. SEOUL VERSION SIMILAR TO ONE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED FROM JAPAN EXCEPT FOR OMISSION OF EXPLICIT DENIAL OF ROKG INVOLVEMENT. LETTER EXPRESSED HOPE THAT INCIDENT "WHICH CAME LIKE A BOLT FROM THE BLUE" WOULD NOT IMPAIR THE "DEEP BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP" BETWEEN JAPAN AND KOREA WHICH JAPANESE LEADERS HAD WORKED TO BUILD. IT CONCLUDED BY BEGGING THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND FORBEARANCE.

2. TONGA ILBO CARRIED REPORT FROM ITS WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT THAT SECRETARY ROGERS AUG 20 TOLD PRESS CONFERENCE USG HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN IN WASHINGTON AND SEOUL OVER SAFETY OF KIM TAE-CHUNG. SECRETARY REPORTEDLY ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO WAY TO KNOW WHOSE WORK INCIDENT WAS. OTHER AFTERNOON NEWSPAPERS DID

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NOT CARRY SECRETARY'S COMMENTS ON KIM.

3. TONGA ILBO REPORT FROM ITS TOKYO CORRESPONDENT QUOTED CABINET AFFAGQS MINISTER NIKKAIDO AS SAYING PRIME MINISTER KIM'S LETTERS TO TANAKA AND OHIRA WERE "POLITE AND SINCERE". ANOTHER STORY FROM SAME CORRESPONDENT REPORTED TESTIMONY OF HOTEL EMPLOYEE WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN KIM TAE-CHUNG GO DOWN IN ELEVATOR ALONE. STORY NOTED CONFLICT WITH PREVIOUS TESTIMONY FROM OTHER SOURCES.

4. AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT RESIDENT IN SEOUL TOLD EMBOFF THAT IN PERSONAL INTERVIEW AUGUST 15 KIM TAE-CHUNG CATEGORICALLY STATED HIS BELIEF THAT "STRONG REACTION BY THE JAPANESE" HAD SAVED HIS LIFE. KIM ALSO PRAISED JAPANESE GOVERNMENT FOR MASSIVE LARGE SCALE EFFORT TO FIND HIM LAUNCHED WITHIN TWO HOURS OF HIS ABDUCTION. ASKED WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ABDUCTION, KIM SAID HE COULD NOT SAY AND ADDED "YOU FIGURE IT OUT".

5. CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING SYSTEM (CBS) CUT OFF

AUGUST 20 RELAY OF VOA NEWS AS ANNOUNCER STARTED TO READ KIM TAE-CHUNG ITEM AND NEXT DAY INFORMED LISTENERS CBS WOULD DISCONTINUE RELAY FOR THE TIME BEING BECAUSE OF "UNAVOIDABLE CIRCUMSTANCES". CBS OFFICIALS TOLD ACTING PAO ON THE REDORD THAT DISCONTINUATION WAS BECAUSE OF "TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES" AND WOULD PROBABLY LAST A MONTH OR MORE. OFF THE RECORD THEY INDICATED SUSPENSION WAS AN ACT OF DISCRETION IN LIGHT OF GOVERNMENT PRESSURES REGARDING KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE.
HABIB

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